



U.S. BORDER PATROL **McALLEN SECTOR**

Chief Patrol Agent Jose E. Garza

News Release

For more information contact the McAllen Border Patrol Sector Public Affairs Office,
SBPA Xavier Rios at (956) 984-3848.

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Falfurrias Border Patrol Agents Nab Marijuana Smuggler Transporting Deceased Relative

FALFURRIAS, Texas—U. S. Border Patrol Agents of the Falfurrias, Texas Border Patrol Station seized 11 pounds of marijuana concealed in quarter panels of vehicle being used to transport deceased relative.

On July 11, 2002, at approximately 12:05 a.m., Border Patrol Agents working at the traffic checkpoint located south of Falfurrias, Texas on highway 281 inspected a maroon 1996 Dodge Caravan minivan driven by Arturo Gonzalez, a United States citizen, 39 years of age, who resides in Edinburg, Texas and two other passengers. Ricky Moreno, a United States citizen, 38 years of age and also from Edinburg, Texas occupied the front passenger seat and in the rear, the third passenger, a corpse of a deceased relative in a casket.

While at the primary inspection point, Border Patrol K9 "Rudy" alerted positively to the minivan after conducting a free-air, non-intrusive, inspection of the exterior of the vehicle. Gonzalez consented to a search of the interior of the vehicle and K9 "Rudy" alerted to the left and right rear quarter panel sections of the minivan. The panels were removed and 6 bundles containing approximately 11 pounds of marijuana were discovered. Both subjects were arrested for possession of marijuana with intent to distribute and read their Miranda rights.

The casket was then inspected and after viewing the corpse, agents believed that the deceased was not professionally prepared for a funeral and that it may have been tampered with. The case was turned over to the Brooks Co. Sheriffs Office who investigated the matter and obtained a court order to examine the corpse. The corpse was examined and it was determined to that it had no been tampered with.

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NO VIDEO AVAILABLE